

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the feature of the present invention whereby space defining member comprises a cover facing a second side of the magnetic circuit component, and whereby the cover comprises a sound release hole which has an area corresponding to about 1.3 to 3.5% of an area of the cover so that an air damping effect is exhibited between a yoke of the magnetic circuit and the cover, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 6, line 27 to page 7, line 6.

In addition, claims 1-3 and 7-10 have been amended to make some minor grammatical improvements and/or to correct some minor antecedent basis problems. These amendments are clearly clerical in nature and are not related to patentability and do not narrow the scope of the claims either literally or under the doctrine of equivalents.

Still further, new claim 14 has been added to recite that the sound release hole comprises a plurality of through holes, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 7, lines 4-6.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1-2 and 4-5 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by USP 6,570,993 ("Fukuyama"), and claims 3-5 and 6-13 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of Fukuyama. These rejections, however, are respectfully traversed with respect to the claims as amended hereinabove.

According to the present invention as recited in amended claim 1, a vibration actuator is provided which comprises a magnetic circuit component having a gap on a first side in a predetermined direction, a coil arranged in the gap, a supporting unit supporting the magnetic circuit component and the coil so that the magnetic circuit component and the coil are separately movable in the predetermined direction, and a space defining member defining an accommodation space accommodating the magnetic circuit component and the coil. In particular, as recited in amended claim 1, the space defining member comprises a cover facing a second side of the magnetic circuit component in the predetermined direction, and the cover comprises a sound release hole which has an area corresponding to about 1.3 to 3.5% of an area of the cover so that an air damping effect is exhibited between a yoke of the magnetic circuit and the cover.

As a result, in the case where the cover is used, it is possible to suppress unstable nonlinear operation of a vibration member around a resonance frequency so as to reduce a harmonic distortion component. In addition, it is possible to flatten characteristic in a low frequency region.

In the case where the cover is not used, on the other hand, harmonic distortion of a large magnitude is produced due to an unstable nonlinear operation of the vibration member around the resonance frequency.

And it is respectfully submitted that neither Fukuyama nor any of the other cited references discloses, teaches or suggests the above-described structural features and advantageous effects of the present invention as recited in amended claim 1.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 1 and each of claims 2-3 and 7-14 depending therefrom all patentably distinguish over Fukuyama, taken singly or in combination with any of the other prior art references of record, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

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In view of the foregoing, entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,



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